

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
REQUEST FOR FILING APPLICATION UNDER 37 CFR 1.53(b)
WITHOUT FILING FEE OR EXECUTED INVENTOR'S DECLARATION

10/17/00

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Atty. Dkt. 871-95

Date: October 17, 2000

Sir:

This is a request for filing a new PATENT APPLICATION under Rule 53(b) entitled:

ENTERTAINMENT PROCESS BASED ON COMPETITION GAMES WITH MULTIPLE CHOICE

without a filing fee and/or without an executed inventor's oath/declaration.

This application is made by the below identified inventor(s). Attached hereto are the following papers:

An abstract together with
24 pages of specification and claims including
11 numbered claims and also attached is/are
2 sheets of accompanying drawings.
 This application is based on the following prior foreign application(s):

Application No.	Country	Filing Date
00 11977	FRANCE	15 September 2000

respectively, the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference in this application, and priority is hereby claimed therefrom.

This application is based on the following prior provisional application(s):

Application No.	Filing Date
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respectively, the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference in this application, and priority is hereby claimed therefrom.

Certified copy/ies of foreign applications attached.
 This application is a continuation/ division/ continuation-in-part of application Serial No. , filed .
 Please amend the specification by inserting before the first line: --This application is a continuation/ division/ continuation-in-part of application Serial No. , filed , the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference in this application.--
 Please amend the specification by inserting before the first line: --This is a continuation of PCT application No. , filed , the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference in this application.--
 Please amend the specification by inserting before the first line: --This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. , filed , the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference in this application.--

 Preliminary amendment to claims (attached hereto), to be entered before calculation of the fee.

Also attached. Information Disclosure Statement/ PTO-1449/ Two References

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

NATHAN et al.

Atty. Ref.: 871-95

Serial No. (To Be Assigned)

Group:

Filed: October 17, 2000

Examiner:

For: ENTERTAINMENT PROCESS BASED ON
COMPETITION GAMES WITH MULTIPLE
CHOICES

October 17, 2000

Assistant Commissioner for Patents

Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

In order to place the above-identified application in better condition for examination, please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 3, line 1, delete "or 2",

Claim 6, line 1, delete "or 5",

Claim 7, lines 1-2, change "one of claims 4 to 6" to --claim 4--,

Claim 8, lines 1-2, change "one of claims 4 to 7" to --claim 4--,

Claim 9, lines 1-2, change "one of claims 4 to 8" to --claim 4--,

Claim 10, lines 1-2, change "one of claims 4 to 9" to --claim 4--.

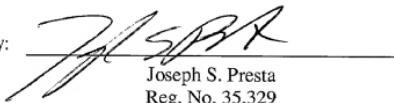
REMARKS

The above amendments are made to place the claims in a more traditional format.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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U.S. PATENT APPLICATION

Inventor(s): Guy NATHAN
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Invention: ENTERTAINMENT PROCESS BASED ON COMPETITION GAMES WITH
MULTIPLE CHOICES

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SPECIFICATION

ENTERTAINMENT PROCESS BASED ON COMPETITION GAMES WITH
MULTIPLE CHOICES

Field of the invention

This invention relates to an entertainment process based on competition games with questions with multiple choice answers related to audio or visual recordings 5 (film, video clip, plays, etc.).

Background of the invention

Games based on the musical knowledge of players are known in prior art, and particularly radio or television 10 games. For example, the game is of the questions/answers type during which a player must for example give the name of an artist, the title or the next word of a song from which a short extract is played. In this type of game, questionnaires are prepared before the game and the game 15 takes place either with a single player, or in the case of a television game with several competitors in the same place and competing on the same question.

Objects and summary of the invention

20 Therefore, the purpose of this invention is to overcome the disadvantages of prior art by proposing an entertainment process based on the music theme by which players in places remote from each other can participate in contest games based on the music theme.

25 This purpose is achieved using an entertainment system based on multiple choice competition games, characterized in that it comprises at least one terminal including connection means to a dedicated remote server, the system also comprising means of playing an extract of 30 a recording with a configurable duration on at least one terminal comprising means of reproducing the recording, means of interaction with a user and means of connection with a dedicated remote server, means of asking a

terminal user a question and suggesting multiple choice answers, the question being related to information characteristic of the extract of the recording, and the recording being selected by means independent of the terminal user.

Another objective is to be able to assign prizes as a function of the classification of participants (prize = free songs, free drink, free participation in the next competition).

This purpose is achieved using an entertainment system like that defined above and characterized in that each terminal comprises means of selecting and validating the terminal user's answer, validation means that update a results file containing information representative of the answer chosen by the user, this file being transmitted to the server by each terminal, to count the score achieved by each user and to classify users.

Another objective of the invention is to propose an entertainment process based on the music theme, in which players located in places remote from each other can participate in games tournaments on the music theme.

This purpose is achieved by an entertainment process based on multiple choice competitive games characterized in that it comprises:

a step in which an extract of a recording with a variable duration is played on a terminal equipped with reproduction means,

a step in which a question related to the extract is created using the terminal interaction means including proposed multiple choice answers, the recording being selected independently of the terminal user.

Another purpose of the invention is to take account of author copyrights when the games include sound or visual reproductions of all or some musical or visual recordings.

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This purpose is achieved by an entertainment process as defined above and characterized in that a log file is updated every time that an extract of a recording is reproduced in a questionnaire screen, the log file 5 contains the identification of the recording and the number of times that the recording has been played, and the log file is periodically transmitted to the server which calculates author's royalties to be paid to the various persons entitled to them.

10

Brief description of drawing

The invention and its characteristics and advantages will become clearer after reading the description with reference to the single attached drawing that represents 15 a simplified diagram of a network comprising a server and several terminals to implement the process according to the invention.

Description of the preferred embodiment

20 The invention will now be described with reference to figure 1. The entertainment process according to the invention is particularly applicable to a computer network comprising a server 1 dedicated to the distribution of audiovisual information, for example such as songs, musical works, films, television programs, etc. 25 This server 1 is connected through a communication means 10 to several terminals 2, 3 through a communication network 4 and communication means 21, 31 installed in each terminal 2,3. The communication network 4 may be of 30 any known type. In particular, the communication network 4 may be a wire or cellular telephone network, or a radio network, a cable network, or optical or satellite network, or any combination of these networks. 35 Similarly, the communication network 4 can introduce intermediate multiservice servers (not shown) that are then connected between the dedicated server 1 and a group

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2, 3 of terminals connected to the multiservice server. For example, a multiservice server may be a cellular telephony operator, an Internet access supplier, an access supplier to a cable television network or a satellite network. In this case, the terminal 3 may be a cellular telephone, or a decoder connected to a television or a personal computer. Similarly, a terminal (2) may be an audiovisual reproduction system as described in patent applications EP786121 and EP974896.

10 Each terminal 2, 3 comprises at least storage means associated with stored information processing means, for example in the form of compressed and encrypted recordings of programs or program and message modules and means 22, 32 of interaction with the user. The
15 interaction means 22, 32 include a display means such as a screen, and at least one selection means, for example chosen from a touch screen, a pointer such as a mouse, browser key in a menu, or a voice control system.

The principle of the entertainment process according to the invention is to run a game program starting by a button triggered by or on interactive means and based on a multichoice questionnaire on a theme, for example music. The specific feature of this questionnaire is that it is based on the collection of information in a database 13, 23 stored on the dedicated server 1 and possibly on a specific terminal 2. In this case, the specific terminal 2 is an audiovisual reproduction system like that defined in patent application EP786121 and EP974896. The database 13, 23 comprises at least information relative to music extracts. In particular, the database comprises at least one table including titles of recordings, artists, the author(s), disk or recording publishers, the year of issue and any other information characterizing the visual or musical recording. Furthermore, the database 13, 23 includes all or some of the data necessary for audio reproduction of

musical extracts. According to the invention, each question includes the audio and/or video reproduction of all or some of the recording.

Questionnaires are usually generated in two ways.

5 In a first variant, the questionnaires are made automatically by a game module 14, 24, 34 memorized on each terminal 2, 3 or on the dedicated server 1. The game module 14, 24, 34 can also be stored on a multiservice server. The main functions of the game
10 module 14, 24, 34 is firstly to trigger playing at least one extract of a recording using decompression and possibly decryption means, and secondly to generate a display screen comprising at least one question about the extract from the recording in the database 13, 23 played
15 on the terminal and a choice among at least two possible answers displayed and that can be selected by one of the interaction means 22, 32.

In another example, the question consists of recognizing the song from an audio extract of it.

20 Each screen corresponding to each question is generated as follows. Firstly, the game module 14, 24, 34 comprises selection means 141, 241, 341 for example comprising a program module or sub-module to select a recording, for example a musical recording, at random
25 from the recordings in the database 13, 23. For example, this random selection can be made using a unique identification number assigned to each recording. The chosen identification number must be the number of a recording for which the party entitled to royalties has given its agreement for the recording to be used in a game. In order to do this, a flag is defined for each recording in the database 13, 23 indicating that the recording cannot be used for a game. Thus, after selecting a recording identification number at random,
30 the selection means 141, 241, 341 verify that a flag is present. If the flag is not present, the selection means
35

validate the selection of the recording. If the flag is detected, the selected recording is ignored and another recording is chosen instead. The other recording can be chosen either using another random selection operation, 5 or by choosing the next identification number in the database. The selection means will check again to see if a flag is present. The selection operation is repeated until a recording is selected that can be used for a game.

10 The game module 14, 24, 34 comprises a sub-module 143, 243 for the extraction of data necessary for an audio reproduction of an extract from the selected recording. The quantity of extracted data corresponds to an extract with a given duration. This given duration is 15 of the order of a few seconds and may be modified by configuration or automatically as a function of a results evaluation program 16, 26, 36 to make the answer or the choice of answer to the question easier or more difficult. For example, selection parameters for the 20 extract (for example audio or video) may be stored in a configuration file 17, 27, 37 read by the extraction sub-module 143, 243 for each generation of a question with an audio or visual reproduction of a recording. Similarly, the configuration file 17, 27, 37 for the extraction sub-module 25 143, 243 is configured such that the moment in the recording at which the extract begins can be chosen, for example at random. The instant at which the extract starts can also be configured in the configuration file 17, 27, 37 for the extraction sub-module 143, 243. Thus, 30 for this type of question based on the audio reproduction of an extract from a recording, the graphic sub-module generates a display screen for which the question includes the text of the question concerning the recording and at the same time the game module 14, 24, 34 35 triggers a command to reproduce the extract from the

recording collected by the extraction module, on the audio reproduction means on the terminal.

In a first variant, the question could simply consist of a predetermined text such as the following:

"What is the title of this recording?" or "Who is singing this song?" or "When was this film released?"

In a second variant, the question may also comprise information about the reproduced recording, for example to build up a clue to the right answer.

In this case, the game module 14, 24, 34 comprises means 142, 242, 342, for example a program module in the database 13, for the collection of at least two determined items of information (INF 1, INF 2) about the

recording selected at random. These two determined items of information may either be of the same type for the entire questionnaire, or they may vary at random from one question to the other depending on the type of game

Module 14, 24, 34. A first information (INF 1) collected is then used by a graphic sub-module of the game module to enter the question in the generated screen. The question includes an invariable text and a part corresponding to the first collected information (INF 1). For example, question 14 is:

"In what year did LINE 1" signs this as an

In this example, INF 1 is the name of the artist who sang the re-played song.

"Who produced this film in LINE 112?"

In the second example, INF 1 is the year in which the extract from the film from which the extract was taken.

In both of the variants described above, the screen generated by the graphic sub-module of the game module 14, 24, 34 also comprises at least two selection areas showing the possible choices of an answer to the question asked, for example in the form of the multiple choice answer. Among these selection areas, a first area

comprises the second information (INF 2) (title, author, singer, composer, producer, actor, publisher, year of release) about the extract from the selected recording and forming the right answer. The other selection areas
5 contain information selected at random in the database by the selection sub-module 141, 241, 341 and containing the wrong answers. This information selected at random is all of the same type (chosen among types such as title, author, singer, composer, producer, actor, publisher,
10 year of release) as the second determined information (INF 2) displayed in the first selection area. In other words, the information displayed in the other selection areas relates to recordings different from the those previously selected but has the same attribute in the
15 database as the attribute of the second determined information (INF 2) displayed in the first selection area. Thus, for example if the determined information displayed in the first selection area is related to the song title, then the selection sub-module will select at
20 least another song title at random in the database for the other information displayed in the remaining selection areas.

In order to generate questionnaires with different degrees of difficulty, the game module 14, 24, 34 reads a
25 parameter file, for example to increase the number of possible answers. The parameter file for the game module 14, 24, 34 can also be configured to select "wrong answers" not in the set of musical or audiovisual recordings in the database, but in only part of this
30 database 13, 23 with points in common with the recording selected at random such that the incorrect answers could be plausible considering the question asked. Thus, if the recording selected at random to create the question is country style music, then the wrong answers will be
35 selected among country music style recordings.

Similarly, the recording chosen at random to create the question can be chosen among one type of recording instead of among all recordings in the database, for example all questions may relate to the same style, the same author or the same artist.

The advantage of the game module according to the first variant is that each questionnaire is different for each game and that each questionnaire is made automatically and unpredictably. Therefore, it is 10 impossible to know what questions will be asked in advance.

When the database 13 is not stored on the terminal 3, the game module 34 includes a communication sub-module 344 that builds up messages to interrogate the database 13 on the dedicated server 1 in order to receive information necessary for generation of the question screen, namely determined information about an extract of a recording selected at random to build the question and the corresponding answer and the information selected at random, for example in the same type of recording or in recordings made at the same period, to form the wrong answers. Thus, messages sent by terminals include selection commands to be used by a module for management of the database 13 on the server 1. The messages also comprise the address of the sending terminal. The server 1 also includes a sub-module 101 for creating and transmitting messages to transmit the result of the collection made by the database manager, to the sending terminal. When it receives the answer from the server, the communication sub-module 344 of the terminal 3 extracts the information collected in the database so that the terminal graphic module 39 can use it to generate the question screen.

Similarly, in another variant, the game module is located on the dedicated server 1 and the questionnaire is started by a command sent by the terminal 2 to start

the game module 14 that, in this case only, comprises a start module 30 to start the game with the server to activate a game start button controlled by interactive means. In this variant embodiment, the server 1
5 comprises a communication module that generates messages comprising information representative of the display corresponding to the question screen. A graphic module 39 of the terminal is designed to interpret messages sent by the server to create question screens as described
10 above. When a question includes a sound or visual reproduction of an extract from a recording corresponding to the question, the server sends information representative of the audio or visual extract in the message, with a command to play this extract.
15 Information representing the audio extract is in compressed and coded form if the terminal is equipped with decompression and decoding means, or in plain text if the terminal is only capable of decompression.

When the graphic sub-module of the terminal displays
20 the multiple choice answer screen, the user (in other words the player) is prompted to answer the question using interaction means by pointing to the answer of his choice. When the game module 14 is located on a dedicated server 1, selection or validation of a
25 selection in a selection area will cause a message to be sent containing the identifier of the chosen answer and information to identify the terminal or the player and activating a comparison sub-module 145, 245 on the server 1. When the game module 24, 34 is stored on the terminal
30 2, 3, selecting or validating the selection of an area on the screen by interaction means will cause activation of a comparison module 145, 245 stored on the terminal 2, 3. In both cases, the comparison sub-module 145, 245 compares the position of the area selected by the player,
35 and for example corresponding to the address of a stored response, with the right answer. This sub-module then

updates a results file 15, 25, 35, using the game module 14, 24, 34. This results file contains firstly identification of the player and/or the associated terminal 2, 3, and secondly either the "true" boolean value to show that the answer selected by the player is the right answer, or a "false" boolean value to indicate that the answer selected by the player is the wrong answer, for each question.

In another variant, the results file 15, 25, 35 10 comprises an identification of the player and/or the terminal 2, 3 and a counter incremented by a determined value every time that the answer selected by the player is the right answer and a second counter incremented every time that the answer selected by the player is a 15 wrong answer (or the first counter decremented by a different value).

According to one variant embodiment, when the game module 24, 34 is stored on the terminal 2, 3, the terminal comparison sub-module 245 is connected to the 20 graphic sub-module 29 to trigger the display of a screen informing the user either that his answer was right, or that he made a mistake and in this case to tell him the right answer. When the game module 14 is located on the server 1, the server contains means 101 of creating and 25 transmitting messages to the terminal, these messages comprising information and associated commands causing the display of a screen informing the user either that he gave the right answer or that he made a mistake. The right answer can also be given if he made a mistake.

According to another variant embodiment, the 30 comparison module comprises means of sending messages from the server to each of the terminals participating in the game by addressing each terminal to generate a screen on each terminal triggering the display of a table 35 displaying the scores of the different players playing on each of the different terminals.

The results file 15, 25, 35 may also comprise information identifying the type and degree of difficulty of the questionnaire. The type of questionnaire depends on the style, for example the style of music (country, 5 rock, rap) about which the questions are asked.

The results file 15, 25, 35 is stored either on the special terminal 2, 3 or on the dedicated server 1. If it is on the dedicated server, whenever the player selects an answer, a sub-module stored on terminal 2 generates a message containing information representative of the position of the selected area, this message is then sent to the dedicated server 1 by the terminal 2, 3 with the terminal identifier and the server uses the comparison module 145, 245 to determine if the answer is right.

After the results file 15, 25, 35 has been updated, or at the same time, the game module 14, 24, 34 generates a new screen containing a new question.

At the end of the questionnaire, in other words when
20 a determined number of question screens has been
displayed, the results file 25, 35 stored on the terminal
2, 3 is sent to the dedicated server 1 through the
communication network 4.

25 The results files 15, 25, 35 transmitted by terminals or stored by the dedicated server 1 are processed by a classification module 11 stored on the server 1, firstly to extract information representative of the results achieved by the user of each terminal, and secondly to update a classification of the different 30 players as a function of the scores that they have achieved in answering the questionnaires. As already described, the results files 15, 25, 35 may comprise information representative of the type of music on which the questionnaire is based, and/or the degree of 35 difficulty. Thus, the player classification may be determined as a function of the type of questionnaire,

its difficulty and the category to which the player belongs (beginner for anyone who has never been registered on the server, advanced for a player who has obtained results above a certain level, expert for a player who has exceeded a second higher level). The dedicated server 1 comprises means 101 of creating a message and sends a message to each player, in other words to each terminal 2, 3, containing information representative of the player's classification. When this message is received, a graphic module on the terminal 2, 3 creates a screen showing the player's classification among the others.

The degree of difficulty of the questionnaire may be modified as a function of the classification of a player. 15 For example, this modification may be made by downloading a new game module 24, 34 from the dedicated server 1 to replace the game module already installed on the terminal.

This new game module then comprises a new 20 configuration file 17, 27, 37 and a new parameter file containing new question creation parameters.

Similarly, depending on the classification made by the server 1, prizes may be assigned to the leading 25 players in the classification. For example, when the terminal is a reproduction system, the prizes may include the possibility of selecting a song on the reproduction system free of charge, or a free drink at the bar in which the reproduction system is installed, or free participation in the next game when a charge is normally 30 made to participate in the game.

In another variant embodiment, the module 24, 34 is updated by the dedicated server 1 sending an update file, comprising essentially commands to modify the parameters file for the game module 24, 34. Thus, as already 35 explained, the number of possible choices for answering the question can be modified.

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A second means of creating the questionnaire consists of creating each question screen in advance. Thus, all questions in each questionnaire are known in advance. However, each question is applicable to a recording for which characteristic information (title, artist, etc.) is stored in the database 13, 23. Consequently, for this questionnaire, each screen contains the text of the question and a command to collect at least one item of information about the recording referred to in the question and contained in the database 13, 23. In the same way as in the first variant, the question screen comprises a first selection area containing the text for the right answer and at least one second selection area containing the text for a wrong answer. The text in the selection areas corresponding to the wrong answers may be obtained either by means of a command to collect determined information from the database, or it may consist of a predetermined text, or may be obtained by means of a random selection command to select information in the database.

For example, one question could be based on the principle consisting of finding the missing word or information in a recording in which the player is asked to find the missing information. In order to do this, 25 the game module 14, 24, 34 comprises a sub-module to process the extract and to mute or hide part of the image of a portion of the extract of the recording when it is reproduced by the game module, in addition to the module for extraction of information representative of the audio 30 or video reproduction of the recording.

As already explained, the extraction module retrieves information representative of an extract from the recording with a given duration, starting from a given moment of the recording. The processing sub-module is configured to mute or hide the extract while it is being reproduced at a given instant of the extract and

for a given time, for example corresponding to the information that the player is expected to find.

Thus, a question of this type comprises firstly a command sent to an extraction sub-module 143, 243 to retrieve information representing the extract from the chosen recording containing the information to be found, from the database. Secondly, the question includes a mute or hide command sent to the processing sub-module, for example to eliminate the sound volume of the determined portion of the extract being reproduced, or to hide a portion of the image. Thirdly, the question may include a command sent to the collection sub-module 142, 242, 342 to extract the name of the song and/or the artist and/or the publisher and/or any other information characterizing a recording in order to build up the question.

In one variant embodiment, muting generated by the processing module is replaced or complemented by mixing a sound or video signal masking the audio or video reproduction of the information to be found, at the given moment.

In another variant, for example in the case in which information representing the audio reproduction of the recording is not stored in the database, the questionnaire includes firstly data representing the extract from the recording also including mixing of the sound signal or a volume reduction corresponding to the missing words. Secondly, a command to play these data on the audio reproduction means of the terminal 2, 3.

30 Player responses are managed in the same way as
before. Thus, for each answer, the results file is
updated by a comparison module 145, 245 in the game
module. Similarly, the dedicated server 1 classifies
players in the same way and transmits the classification
35 results to each player.

Unlike the first type of questionnaire, the second type of questionnaire is made in advance, and consequently each module corresponding to a questionnaire of the second type comprises a flag representative of how 5 the questionnaire is used. As soon as the questionnaire has been used for a player or a group of players, the flag associated with this player or group of players is set in a table on the server such that the questionnaire cannot be reused by the same player or the same group.

10 When the game module is activated by one or several players, in other words by one or several terminals, the game module 14, 24, 34 verifies if the flag is set in the corresponding table. If it is set, another questionnaire of the same type is sent to the terminals 2, 3.

15 The advantage of the second type of questionnaire is that several players can answer the same questionnaire at the same time. In the second case, the classification sub-module of the server 1 is configured to manage the results of several players, in other words terminals 2, 3 20 replying to the same questionnaire at the same time. In order to do this, the comparison module 145, 245 described above generates a message to the server after each answer by each player. This message includes an identification of the sender terminal 2, 3 and 25 information representative of the player's answer to a question, for example identified by its number. Starting from these messages, the classification module 11 sorts the terminals as a function of the answers provided. The dedicated server 1 then transmits a message containing 30 information representing the general classification of the game, and possibly presenting answers given by other players, to each terminal participating in the same questionnaire. The graphic sub-module of the terminal 2, 3 uses this message to generate a screen to display the 35 classification and possibly the answers given by the other participants.

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According to one variant embodiment, a payment procedure takes place before the game module 14, 24, 34 is started. This procedure may be in several forms. Thus, when the terminal 2 is a reproduction system comprising payment means, game mode is selected by action on control means in the audiovisual reproduction system, and the result is that a specific screen is displayed. This specific screen comprises a message inviting the user to pay an amount of money using payment means installed on the terminal, or to enter information necessary to subsequently debit the user's bank account to pay for his participation in the game. After making the payment or giving the information necessary to debit his account, the user is allowed to access the game module. The game module starts after the means of payment in the audiovisual reproduction system has detected the requested sum.

When the terminal 3 is not equipped with means of payment, the game module will not be activated until after a communication with the dedicated server 1. As explained above, information is collected from the database on the dedicated server 1 to generate the screens on the terminal. Access to the database is then preceded by a terminal authentication procedure. Thus, the terminal must be identified by the server before it can access the database. For example, this identification is assigned when a subscription procedure is performed before the first time that the terminal is connected to the server. This subscription procedure may include a payment step during each new connection, in which case the dedicated server 1 asks the terminal for its identification to authorize access to the database.

In one variant embodiment of the invention, the player has at least one joker to help him choose his answer. For example, a joker can be selected by using a virtual button represented on the question screen

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displayed on the display means of the terminal 2, 3 and pointed at by the user using interaction means. Selecting a joker starts a sub-module 146, 246, 346 that modifies at least one element of the question to make the 5 player's answer easier.

For example, this joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 can cause reproduction of the extract of the recording with different parameters, for example by increasing the duration of the extract. In this case, and for this 10 question only, the extraction module parameter file is modified so that the data extracted from the database result in a longer extract from the recording.

In another example, the joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 modifies the display screen, for example by hiding at 15 least one selection area containing a wrong answer.

In another example, the joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 gives the right answer and considers that the player has given the right answer.

This joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 also includes a 20 file forming a joker counter and containing information representative of the number of jokers available. This file is updated at the beginning of the game, for example, with a predetermined number of jokers. Every time that the user selects the virtual button to validate 25 a joker, the joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 checks if the available number of jokers is equal to zero, and if it is not the sub-module decrements the number of jokers by one. Otherwise, the joker sub-module 146, 246, 346 displays a message stating that the jokers credit is 30 exhausted. In one variant embodiment, the jokers counter is initialized to zero at the beginning of the game. When the user selects the virtual button to select a joker for the first time, a jokers payment screen is displayed inviting the player to pay an amount of money 35 to obtain at least one joker. The jokers counter is updated to include the new number of jokers, depending on

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the amount of money paid for by the player. If the jokers counter is reduced to zero during the game and the player selects the virtual button again to validate a joker, the jokers payment screen can be displayed again 5 so that the player can rebuild his stock of jokers by making another payment.

The jokers payment rule can be defined such that the amount necessary to pay for a joker increases as the 10 number of jokers requested by the player since the beginning of the game increases.

When the questionnaire includes at least one reproduction of at least one extract from a recording, the game module 14, 24, 34 includes a log file updated by a specific sub-module. This log file contains 15 information representative of the number of times that a recording was played during the game, and possibly the duration of the reproduced extracts. The log file is either stored on the terminal 2, 3 or on the dedicated server 1. When the log file is stored on the terminal 2, 20 3, the communication means periodically transmit information contained in the file to the server 1, and then the game module 24, 34 stored on the terminal 2, 3 reinitializes the log file.

The information contained in log files is processed 25 by a royalties calculation module 12 that extracts information about the use of recordings to determine and calculate the royalties that are to be paid to the different parties entitled to them.

Thus, the entertainment system according to the 30 invention is characterized in that it comprises at least one terminal comprising connection means to a remote dedicated server 1, the system also comprising means of playing an extract with a duration that can be varied, of a recording on at least one terminal 2, 3 comprising 35 recording reproduction means, interaction means with a user and connection means 21, 31 with a remote dedicated

server 1, means of asking a terminal user a question, suggesting multiple choice answers, the question being related to information characteristic of the extract from the recording, the recording being selected by selection 5 means independent of the terminal user.

According to another feature, each terminal comprises means for the user of the terminal 2, 3 to select and validate his answer, the validation means updating a results file 15, 25, 35 containing information representative of the answer chosen by the user, this file being transmitted to the server 1 by each terminal 2, 3 to count the score made by each user to classify the users.

According to another feature, the played extract from the recording and the information necessary to create the question about information characteristic of the extract from the recording and the multiple choice answers are stored in a database stored on storage means on the server 1 or on storage means on the terminal 2.

20 Similarly, the entertainment process according to the invention is characterized in that it comprises:

a step in which an extract of a recording is played, for a variable duration, on a terminal provided with reproduction means,

25 a step in which a question related to the extract is created using the terminal interaction means 2, 3, suggesting multiple choice answers, the recording being selected independently of the terminal user.

According to another feature, the process also
30 comprises:

- a step in which a results file 15, 25, 35 is sent by each terminal to a dedicated server 1 containing information representative of the answer chosen by the user using interaction means, to count the score made by each user to classify users.

According to another feature, the step in which the question is created using interaction means is preceded by a payment step.

5 According to another feature, the recording on which determined information is collected is selected at random in a database stored either on the server or on the terminal.

10 According to another feature the choice of the recording from which the extract is taken is made from a determined type of recording contained in the database.

15 According to another feature, a log file is updated every time that an extract of a recording is reproduced in a screen of the questionnaire, the log file contains the identification of the recording and the number of times that the recording has been played, the log file is transmitted periodically to the server 1 that calculates royalties to be paid to the various authors.

20 According to another feature, the process comprises a step in which a joker is selected and validated, this step comprising a step in which the question and/or multiple choice answers are modified to make it easier for the user to find an answer.

25 According to another feature, the step in which a joker is selected and validated is preceded by a payment step in which the user is invited to pay an amount of money to obtain a determined number of jokers.

30 Persons experienced in the subject will realize that many other specific embodiments of this invention would be possible without going outside the scope of the invention as claimed. Consequently, the various embodiments must be considered as illustrations, but can be modified within the scope defined in the attached claims, and the invention cannot be limited to the details given above.

CLAIMS

1. Entertainment system based on multiple choice competition games, characterized in that it comprises at least one terminal including connection means to a dedicated remote server (1), the system also comprising 5 means of playing an extract of a recording with a configurable duration on at least one terminal (2, 3) comprising means of reproducing the recording, means of interaction with a user and means (21, 31) of connection with a dedicated remote server (1), means of asking a 10 terminal user a question and suggesting multiple choice answers, the question being related to information characteristic of the extract of the recording, and the recording being selected by means independent of the terminal user.

15 2. Entertainment system according to claim 1, characterized in that each terminal comprises means of selecting and validating the answer given by the user of the terminal (2, 3), validation means to update a results 20 file (15, 25, 35) containing information representative of the answer chosen by the user, this file being transmitted to the server (1) by each terminal (2, 3) to count the score achieved by each user and to classify users.

25 3. Entertainment system according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the played extract of the recording and the information necessary to create the question about the information characteristic of the extract of 30 the recording and the multiple choice answers are stored in a data base stored on storage means on the server (1) or on storage means on the terminal (2).

DOCUMENTA

4. Entertainment process based on multiple choice competition games, characterized in that it comprises:
5 a step in which an extract of a recording with a variable duration is played on a terminal equipped with reproduction means,
10 a step in which a question related to the extract is created using the interaction means on the terminal (2, 3) including proposed multiple choice answers, the recording being selected independently of the terminal user.

15 5. Entertainment process according to claim 4, characterized in that the process also comprises:
15 - a step in which a results file (15, 25, 35) is sent by each terminal to a dedicated server (1) containing information representative of the answer chosen by the user using interaction means, to count the score made by each user to classify users.

20 6. Entertainment process according to claim 4 or 5, characterized in that the step in which the question is created using interaction means is preceded by a payment step.

25 7. Entertainment process according to one of claims 4 to 6, characterized in that the recording on which determined information is collected is selected at random in a database stored either on the server or on the terminal.

30 8. Entertainment process according to one of claims 4 to 7, characterized in that the choice of the recording from which the extract is taken is made from a determined type of recording contained in the database.

9. Entertainment process according to one of claims 4 to 8, characterized in that a log file is updated every time that an extract of a recording is reproduced in a screen of the questionnaire, the log file contains the
5 identification of the recording and the number of times that the recording has been played, the log file is transmitted periodically to the server (1) that calculates royalties to be paid to the various entitled parties.

10 10. Entertainment process according to one of claims 4 to 9, characterized in that the process comprises a step in which a joker is selected and validated, this step comprising a step in which the question and/or multiple
15 choice answers are modified to make it easier for the user to find an answer.

11. Entertainment process according to claim 10, characterized in that the step in which a joker is selected and validated is preceded by a payment step in which the user is invited to pay an amount of money to obtain a determined number of jokers.

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ABSTRACT

Applicant : TOUCHTUNES MUSIC CORPORATION

Inventors : Guy NATHAN

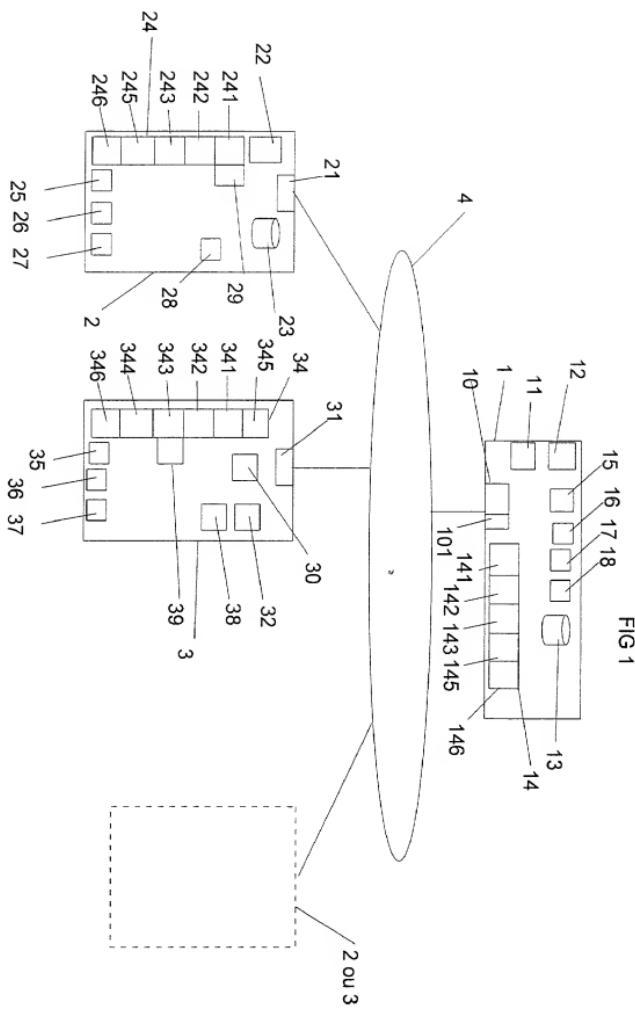
Tony MASTRONARDI

Entertainment system based on multiple choice competition games, characterized in that it comprises at least one terminal including connection means to a dedicated remote server (1), the system also comprising means of playing an extract of a recording with a configurable duration on at least one terminal (2, 3) comprising means of reproducing the recording, means of interaction with a user and means (21, 31) of connection 5 with a dedicated remote server (1), means of asking a terminal user a question and suggesting multiple choice answers, the question being related to information comprising means of reproducing the recording, means of interaction with a user and means (21, 31) of connection 10 with a dedicated remote server (1), means of asking a terminal user a question and suggesting multiple choice answers, the question being related to information characteristic of the extract of the recording, and the recording being selected by means independent of the 15 terminal user.

Figure 1

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FIGURE POUR L'ABREGE

